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Maloney back in action

Mayor back to work after mild stroke. Page 2

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2016

Playing fair at school

McKay is Ontario's first fair trade school. Page 3





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Using The Force



Darth Vader finds himself battling against a group of kids during Niagara's Largest Lightsaber Battle, at the fourth annual Jace Wars event in Port Colborne. See story on Page 10



Mayor Maloney returning to work after stroke

MICHELLE ALLENBERG Postmedia Network

Port Colborne Mayor John Maloney will head back to work on July 1.

The mayor suffered a stroke Feb.19 forcing him to take time off. Maloney said he has been recovering well over the past five months, but he isn't back to feeling 100 per cent

*I'm almost there, its been good. I've been taking it easy, no stress, lots of exercises, lots of rest. It's a slow process, but it's been positive as progress, Maloney said during a phone interview last week mayor spent time MAYOR JOHN at the

MALONEY health and rehabilita. tion centre in St. Catharines shortly after suffering what

was called a "mild stroke." Community and council

members have been supportive of Maloney during the past months. He said he has tried to keep away from council matters due to the stress dayto-day business can cause.

"To co-ordinate my recovery I've just been reading the

"I will certainly bave to bring myself up to date ... July 1st is Canada Day and I will be going around to various civic functions that have to do with being the mayor."

Maloney said coming back on Canada Day is nice because the community will be participating in fun family

During his absence Ward 3 Coun. Bea Kenny stepped in as deputy mayor. Maloney said Kenny has been doing a great job and he has only beard good things.

Monday will be Kenny's last council meeting acting as deputy mayor. She said she thoroughly enjoyed her time

representing the city at local Kenny said. council meetings and regional

council meetings. "It's been a challenge for me, but thoroughly enjoya-

After physical rehabilitation Maloney is no longer using a walker. Kenny said he is instead using a cane. "I'm very happy he is well enough to return. He's anx-

Kenny noted Nancy Giles. executive assistant to the mayor, has been a tremendous help in recent months. She said Giles is owed a lot of credit and will ensure Maloney's transition back to

charge, all with a view to

Police board makes Uber legal

Postmedia Network

Uber will be legal in Niagara starting July 1. That is one of a number of

changes the Niagara police services board adopted during its monthly meeting last Thursday The board also made it

legal for taxis to operate anywhere in the region. Previously they could only operate in the municipality where their licence was issued. "The police board had to

make some very tough decisions," said Hanif Patni, CEO of Coventry Connections, which owns Central Taxi and is one of the largest operators in Canada.

"They had to skirt between wanting the new ride-sharing economy to operate and, at the same time, make sure it is safe and consumers are pro-

Patni said he is confident his company can compete under the new regulations, and it has invested heavily in its Niagara



The Niagara police services board has approved regulations that deal with taxis and ridehailing services. They take effect on Canada Day.

"People are noticing," he sald, "They know when you enter a taxi it is a safe place to be. It has a predictable price there is no surge pricing. "We have done a lot. We

have gone to hybrids. We have gone to point-of-sale devices. We have gone to apps. We have improved our code of conduct. and our drivers are permanent. Uber drivers come and go, Our taxis also have cameras and eafety measures that there is no way Uber will have." Uber customers use a mobile app to request a ride, set a pickup and drop off location, and get a cost estimate before confirming the request. Drivers use their own vehicles. Uber Canada spokesperson Susle Heath commended board chair Bob Gale and the police services board for their work to update ground transportation regulations in Niagara

lone We've had a chat he was anxious to return, but we wanted him to take his time and not overdo it right away."

Kenny will pass on her notes so Maloney can get up to date on city matters, although she said he did receive e-mails while he was away

work will be smooth.

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CHANGES TO RIDE-FOR-HIRE a flat fee and a nor trin

vehicles have provincially approved insurance

■ TNC drivers must have background checks and vehicle safety requirements identical to those applied to taxi drivers and taxi cabs

■ There will be no quotas on TNC drivers or vehicles. ■ The minimum fare is restricted to \$3.75 per trip

for TNC arranged rides. ■ TNC vehicles required to have identification as a TNC

vehicle

■ TNCs to be subject to extensive record maintenance and production requirements

Licensing fees to be charged to TNCs to include

She also thanked regional Coun, Andy Petrowski, who she said was instrumental and dedicated to bringing ridesharing to Niagara. We will be reviewing the bylaw in depth and speakindustries are safe and adeing with local officials to fur-

ther understand how the reg-

ulations may be implemented.

making the administration and enforcement of the TNC provisions cost recovery In addition, changes approved respecting the existing taxi industry, include:

■ Maintenance of taxi cab quotas with the proviso that the issue of quotas is to be reviewed in one year Taxi licences, although issued on a per area municipality

basis, may be utilized regionwide to be reviewed in one-year ■ Identical TNC fare provisions referenced above

in respect of taxi rides dispatched in a manner similar to a TNC

and will have more to say in the coming days," she said. Gale said the objective of the new regulations is to ensure drivers and vehicles in both the ride-sharing and taxi

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McKay first fair trade school in province

Postmedia Network

McKay Public School in Port Colborne is stepping up Last Wednesday, the school

received the designation of being Ontario's first fair trade school. This means its staff and students support people being paid fairly for their work and not being forced to work in sweat shops where they earn little and even risk their

Port Colborne deputy mayor John Mayne remarked how it means McKay is the first out of 3,977 elementary schools across the province to take this

"That's something to really be proud of," he said.

Jenn Vanderlaan, a teacher at the school and co-chair of the fair trade committee, said in order to receive this designation, the school had to complete an application. In it. McKay included lesson descriptions, pictures and video, and also its plans to

knowledge and ideas throughout the school "When the news arrived.

we were stunned." Vanderlaan said of when the approval came in. "Especially when we were told that our application was the most detailed and comprehensive one they'd ever received?

Fellow teacher and chair Amher Christie said it has been a combined effort of the staff and the students, all of whom impressed her with their level of support.

The students, including her own Grade 6/7 French immersion class, were asked to take on extra work to help make this happen, but Christie said

they were happy to do it. "(These are) all big responsibilities for elementary school students," she said, "But they annmached each challenge with enthusiasm and they never cease to amaze me.

"They rallied with me and they were the ones whose curiosity originally inspired me to



Grade 7 French immersion student Megan Bartley, in grey, serves coffee and food with classmate Brenna Bohun and Grade 6 French immersion student Jonathan Graves to fellow students, staff and guests of the presentation designating McKay Public School the first fair trade school in the province.

explore what we can do with this as a school " The students on the fair trade committee were in

fair trade goodies outside of the principal's office after the presentation. They handed out coffee, muffins, bananas and, charge of manning a table of of course, celebratory cake.

Megan Bartley, a Grade 7 French immersion student, was one of the youths at the table. She said it's been really fun and interesting to learn

Classmate Brenna Bohun.

also helping out at the table, said learning about fair trade makes people strong and it's cool to see how the community has been reacting to their

District School Board of Niapara trustee for Fort Erie and

Port Colborne, David Schaubel congratulated students and told them they should feel proud of their efforts. He said the school board should "take cues" and learn from what they've done to become better leaders for them

Vance Badawey, who was mayor when Port Colhorne became the first fair trade town in 2009, described the students and their efforts as inspiring.

They're inspiring their peers to not only become a fair trade school and/or city, but also just simply to be thinking about what fair trade's all about," said Badawey, now MP.

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Region faces OW shortfall of more than \$1 million

Postmedia Network Niagara has a more than

\$1-million problem, Demand for social assistance benefits in the community is expected to exceed available funding by \$1.3 million for 2016 - a trend that will continue if action is not

brought forward by Niagara Region's acting community services commissioner Adrienne Jugley to last Tuesday's public health and social services committee, where she

outlined the need for a solu-A review will be conducted

to determine possible options to address the funding gap, including areas where benefits That was the message and programs could poten-

tially be reduced or elimi-The review will include the

Housing Stability Plan program, which supports homelessness prevention by providing assistance with first and last month's rent, rent arrears and moving costs; Niagara Emergency Energy Fund NEEF), which assists with gas and hydro arrears, and reconnection fees; and Ontario Support Program discretion-

ary benefits. Those benefits include items such as dental services funerals and burials, vision care, medical supplies, prosthetics and household necessities such as beds and major appliances. Also included is funding to ODSP clients to assist with housing-related costs such as rent arrears and "They help pay for things

that support client health and safety and that help people find or retain a place to live," Jugley said. "Obviously these things are also important to the employability of our clients, which is a key goal for our program and a focus of

our work Before the end of the year, the Region's social assistance division is anticipating demand in those three program areas to exceed the \$6-million budget

by \$1.3 million

Part of the issue, Jugley said, is low social assistance rates, which offer \$670 per month to a single person and less than \$1,200 a month for a family of four.



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Hope for the hopeless

PASTOR GARY TOMILICK Wainfleet Congregational Christian Church

t is 1912, and you are aboard the world's finest ship. Many say that even God cannot sink it. Hours later you are jolted forward. You hear and feel the mysterious banging, the crunching sound of metal scraping ice and the breaking of boards. Freezing water gushes in. Panic is every-

where as people push and shove each other. Many grasp frantically for the lifeboats, which You are sinking fast. The power is out, and

the lights are dead. The ship is breaking into pieces, and you are helpless. Hundreds of innocent people jump, or are thrown into the icy waters. One by one they

slowly suffer and die from hypothermia and exposure. Husbands and wives embrace, trying to comfort each other. They whisper words of encouragement. "I love you, It will be all right." Mothers cradle children, rubbing their

heads, telling them help is on the way. They try to prolong their short time together, yet they do not want their children to suffer too long. Many will die together as they have lived together, locked in each other's

embrace. For they are families in life and in This watery grave cruelly pulls down over

1,200 of them with its deadly fingers. Some wonder, where is God? Others curse and many others pray. Despair and pain are written upon the faces of many. Their expressions would give voice to the words applied to the apostle Paul and all those aboard another ship

"When neither sun nor stars appeared for



AP FILE PHOTO The British passenger liner Titanic leaves Southampton, England on her maiden voyage. The ship sank in the North Atlantic Ocean in the early morning of April 15, 1912, after colliding with

may days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved," (Acts 27-201

Maybe you too have faced situations that seemed hopeless and have given up. You may understand the fears of those on the ship with Paul. The apostle offered words of encouragement, "But now I urge you to keep up your courage," (v. 22).

How could Paul say this?

an iceberg.

An angel of God stood beside him (v. 23) and told him of the outcome. That not only infused their courage and strengthened their flagging spirits, but a powerful promise also attended his words, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. This happened just as the faithful, promisekeeping God said that it would. Many swam to safety; others clung to pieces of the ship. All reached land safely, (v. 44)

He is an anchor for your soul in the storms of life. They were shipwrecked, but they all made it (everyone). Do you sometimes feel like your life is a shipwreck? You are just drifting aimlessly along. You are hanging onto the flimsy pieces of your broken dreams. You are bobbing up and down with no direction, like a cork in the ocean of life, and you have nothing solid under your feet.

Well, just as surely as the angel of the Lord stood beside the apostle Paul, He likewise stands beside you. And He will bring you safely to land.

Upon your death, when you cross the shore to the other side he will bring you to Him, provided you have confessed your sins and have received the free gift of eternal life found in Christ and in Christ alone. This is the blessed hope, and hope keeps you alive. It looks ahead as Christ looked beyond the cross to the glory that He had previously enjoyed with His Father, from the beginning When you have given up bope, you will not last very long. We all need a fresh portion of hope, a fresh infusion of encouragement, and an injection of grace daily.

Take comfort in this, If you are a Christian, you will not even be able to imagine the lov it will be to one day look into the face and the eyes of Christ, your Master, Redeemer, and

Lord.

To have Him open His arms to you and to hear those blessed words, "Welcome my son, my daughter. Enter into the Joy of the Lord."

For me it will, and I pray also for you that this decision will give hope for the hopeless, hope for every situation in life, hope for the heart. And the blessed hope will sustain you both now and forever. Praise His holy name.

Region faces real test on Ontario Works iagara has a problem. It is not an issue that can be ignored, and there is no

quick or easy solution to it. It also represents a serious test for a regional council that is better known for selfinterested squabbling over procedure than getting the public's work accomplished.

Now it has an opportunity to prove it is worthy of the trust the public placed in it on election day. At the moment, Niagara Region faces a \$1.3

million Ontario Works shortfall.

programs," like assistance with medical and dental costs, bousing and energy bills. That budget is funded almost entirely by the provincial government, with the Region The Region had budgeted \$6.2 million for chipping in an increasingly smaller amount



Ontario Works items, called "discretionary

residents on Ontario Works. That is a figure that should give you some degree of pause, given that Niagara has a total population of about 430,000. Demand from those citizens for Ontario Works discretionary programming has, effectively, busted the bank. The core payout of Ontario Works -

due to uploading by Queen's Park. There are currently some 23,000 Niagara

unemployment and disability payments - isn't anywhere near enough to get by on. A person living on social assistance receives only \$679 a month, for instance, As a result of these paltry sums, those on tionary programs - so-called because they are not mandatory but at the discretion of the Region and determined on a case-by-case basis - to make ends meet The problem is the provincial funding formula is woefully inadequate.

assistance have come to rely on the discre-

A region will receive a maximum of \$10

per case, per month (there may be multiple people within a single case file). The regional government can then top up the discretionary spending depending on the need.

Continued on next page

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COMMENT

Region faces real test on Ontario Works

From previous page

Demand has grown, and as a result the Region finds itself staring at a \$1.3 million social assistance shortfall, for which it has no contingency fund to How, then, to make up the

difference? The Region can either cut services,

take money from elsewhere in the budget, or raise taxes

Cutting services would be a colossal and cruel mistake. About 23,000 of our neighbours depend on the discretionary programs to ensure they stay in a home, or get critical medical care like dental work.

Slashing the small portion of the Ontario Works budget actually provided by the Region is only going to make life harder for those already

living on the margins. We know that when services are cut, helping lift people out of poverty in the long term becomes exponentially more difficult. And it will put more weight

on the shoulders of local agencies and charities, which are already struggling to meet demand Only the most capricious of councillors could see cutting services to our

most vulnerable population as a viable alternative. Still, the money has to come from

somewhere. Raising the tax levy is the easiest way to do it, although one that is not

politically palatable to many Niagara residents nor for a council composed of men and women who mistakenly believe their job is to spend as little of the public's money as possible, when their real task is to spend it wisely. That said, there are limits to how

much the public can pay, particularly in an environment where costs for everything from road repairs to health care climb every year. Council's first step should be to look

to other programs for possible savings. The Ontario government has been uploading costs for many services in the past few years, including Ontario Works. In fact, a significant reason regional council was able to pass a

zero-increase budget this year was that On the social assistance side of things, provincial uploading saved the

Region \$2.7 million, more than enough to cover the current shortfall. However, that money was allocated to other programs during the budget process, but it does demonstrate there is money that can be found when 2017 budget delib-

erations get underway in a few months. This will mean directing funds to social assistance and away from other programs. That will be an onerous task

for council. Long term, what Niagara and many other Ontario communities need is a change in the provincial funding

formula that better addresses our economic reality. In the here and now, however, Niagara politicians need to do what

they can to ensure thousands of citizens don't end up on the streets with a mouthful of rotten teeth. This means many councillors

will have to abandon the immature ideological notion that a zero per cent budget is a high-water mark of accomplishment. It is not.

Meeting the needs of the community is what they were elected to do, and sometimes that costs money The crises this council has faced to

date have been of their own making, the result of infighting, self-aggrandizing and shallow politics. Now it faces a problem of real substance. What mettle it shows in dealing with

it will speak volumes about their political competence.

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SOCIAL ASSISTANCE BY THE NUMBERS

Approximately 23,000 Niagara residents receive social assistance through the

The total regional budget for social assistance is \$6.2 million, most of which is provided by the provincial government. The Region faces a shortfall of about

So far this year, the Region has issued: ■ 11,800 cheques at an average of \$349 each for discretionary benefits covering items like dental work or mobility 6,748 cheques at an average of \$474

through the housing stability program, which helps keep people housed. ■ 1,502 cheques at an average of \$480 through the regional emergency energy program to help low-income residents.

including but not limited to those on social assistance, pay their energy bills FURNITURE GALLERY

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LOCALNEWS

Region faces OW shortfall of more than \$1 million

From Page 3 The lack of funding pushes clients to rely on those discretionary benefits to get by, she

The budgeted funds are primarily provided by the province, with Niagara chipping in about \$192,000 for discretionary benefits and \$650,000 for

NEER The issue, one being faced by many Ontario communities, is partially rooted in policy and program changes introduced by the province since 2012, including cancellation of the community startup and maintenance benefit, Jugley said.
"That program bad gone

a long way in helping clients and other low-income residents with urgent housing and other needs," she said. Prior to that time there

was no cap on benefits, she added, which meant benefits that were needed were always

A provincially-mandated cap has since been put in place limiting discretionary benefits to \$10 per month for each social assistance case, regardless of how many indi-

viduals are included under a single file. Niagara's current OW

caseload includes more than 11,000 files representing about 23,000 people. The regional division has

worked to absorb past shortfalls, offsetting costs through "under expenditures in other OW allowances and benefits," Jugley said. But by 2018, OW benefits

will be 100 per cent funded by the province and current levy funding may no longer be available to offset those overages — unless council chooses to directly address the issue, she added *Unfortunately, the changes

that were made at the province and the ones we live with now are putting pressure on the services where we help people who are in crisis," Jugley said. "What's important to know

is that if we reduce or eliminate many of the benefits we currently provide, clients will likely not have other options. We are being told, even now, that the community agencies simply don't have the resources to help us."

Options staff are reviewing as possible solutions include advocating for the province to increase the \$10 cap and to increase ODSP funding; eliminating or reducing benefits to stay within the budget and the provincial cap; or continuing to use funds within the

current benefits, even after the provincial uploading has been completed. "Our analysis will include a full understanding of the impact of recommended options, including potential negative risks to clients, increased demand on outside service agencies, or even

regional tax levy to support

notential decreased funding that support agencies," Jugley bies St. Catharines Coun. Brian Heit recommended staff rank the benefits in order of importance to help council deter-

mine where reductions or cuts could potentially be made. He asked for review of the funeral and hurial costs in particular to outline whether

cost saving measures were messure available. Jugley said staff will likely return to council with a "com-

September. mfirth@postmedia.com Twitter: @mfirthStandard

strategies" to address the issue "It will be un to council how

much they want to strip back." The province is

in the process of progressively uploading the cost of discretionary benefits. "Every year the (regional) levy amount that is required is less and less," Jugley said, adding over the past few years those freed-up dollars have

been allocated for other purposes during the budget proc-In 2016, that accounted for \$2.7 million - more than enough to address the

increasing demand for ben-It will be at council's discretion, Jugley said, whether those dollars will be used in the future to help ease that

The staff report outlining future options is scheduled to be presented to council in



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The Power of Pushing a Pedal

Special to Postmedia

Heather Ogilvie knows the power of pushing a pedal. It not only gets her closer to the finish line of OneFoundation for Niagara Health System's (NHS) Big Move Cancer Ride, it supports treatment for cancer patients at the NHS's Walker Family Cancer Centre. Ogilvie knows first-hand as a the charity bike ride helps those who come through the Cancer Centre's door patients and their families

in the non-competitive event were even more personal. Her mother, Gail, was diagnosed with breast cancer for the second time, and she would receive treatment at the Cancer Centre. "It's become that much more

important to support the facility because everyone has been really good to her." Ogilvie says, "My motivation comes from all the patients I see but also because it hits close to home."

Ogilvie will ride 100 kilometres at the eighth radiation therapist how much edition of the Big Move Cancer Ride on Sunday, Sept. 11. She's been building up to it since accidentally missing



The Bikefit Sunflowers are regular participants in the Big Move Cancer Ride



Heather Ogilvie (left) rides in the 2015 Big Move Cancer Ride alongside fellow Radiation Therapist, Alexis Millhiser

convincing to get on her bike four years ago and raise 25 she signed up for. money for the cause.

Last year, though, her reasons for pedalling 60 kilometres

alike. So it didn't take much a turn her first year and riding 32 kilometres instead of the

But no one should be daunted by that distance. With 25 and 50-kilometre courses,

the Big Move Cancer Ride Fundraising also doesn't have is really about having fun, says Kristina Manzi, the OneFoundation's interim

Director of Operations. "It's a ride, not a race," she assures.

So far, 160 people have signed up, committing to raise a minimum \$500 in the process. All money stays in Niagara, where more than 33.000 radiation treatments have been completed since the Walker Family Cancer Centre opened in 2013.

strap on bike belmets come ride day. Because it's not a competitive event, cyclists 12 years of age and older can participate. They can prepare for the Big Move at weekly training rides held Thursdays

Community Centre.

to be an exercise in spinning your wheels, Riders have hosted garage sales, sold homemade dog treats, shaved their head, or simply put a collection jar in a busy spot to make their fundraising goals. Ogilvie's hockey league holds

\$500 in pledges. Forming a team of riders also helps, even if everyone cycles a different route on ride day. "We have some really strong fundraisers," Manzi says. Manzi hopes 500 people will "The teams have a really unique way to help because

a bottle drive to help her reach

it's gets everyone (on the team) motivated," Much like Ogilvie's own reasons for riding have changed, so has the meaning

of the event. Before the at 6 p.m. at the Rockway Cancer Centre opened, the theme was One Pedal at a

Time, with a focus on building the centre so patients wouldn't have to travel to Hamilton for radiation

This year's theme is Inspired to Ride. Reasons to participate abound. Manzi notes, be it honouring a loved one's memory, celebrating recovery, or because the \$2.8 million raised so far has been used to buy tools to assist treatment.

"It's tough to find people around here who haven't been touched by cancer in some way," Manzi says. "I've been (organizing this event) for eight years and ... you get to see the spirit of why people participate in this. It's really an emotional day on top of a fun ride."

Visit bigmovecancerride. com to learn more and register.



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Liver donor 'feels good on the inside'

CHERVI CLOCK Postmedia Network It's been five months since

they last saw each other in hos-Five months since each of their lives was forever changed.

who were strangers before their lives became forever connected. met each other to talk about

the transplant that saved one life, and into words. "I was looking for a purdeeply enriched another. They bugged, Cried, And talked about the journey that began last

November when 45-year-old Leanne Becevel of Niagara Falls read a story in The Standard about Jane Villeneuve's search for a liver donor.

Leanne felt moved to help Jane, 55, is mom to twin 13-year-old girls, Sabrina and Violet, Leanne is a

mom, too, Her son, loe is 18, and Iulia is 16. And she couldn't bear the possibility that Jane might not be around to see her children grow up.

She thought about giving part of her own liver. And asked herself: "Why couldn't I do that?"

And when her husband, Chris, came home for lunch that day, she gauged her idea with a statement that was meant more as a question: "I think I'm going to donate a liver to someone." Yeah, sure," he responded. There

was no hesitation Then after some more heart-toheart discussions with her family, she

decided to give it a go. "It was just meant to be," says Leanne. Her reasons are both simple and complicated, and hard to put pose," she says. Not that her life didn't bave meaning, but she was looking for something more. "And then this came along, And I thought, 'I think this is

what I need to be doing," She contacted Jane, and they met. Jane sat wrapped in a heated blanket, in an armchair in the livingroom of her St. Catharines home, and talked to

"I told her the truth about the curgery," she said, "I had to tell her the

dark side." She did not want a potential donor to start the application process, that would eventually lead to both physical and psychological testing, without

knowing some of the risks. Jane was diagnosed with liver circhosis last July. She was put on the Trillium Gift of Life's wait list for a transplant from a deceased donor, but was told her hest

chance would be to find a living donor. During living donor surgery, the right lobe of the donor's liver is removed and transplanted into the patient. Within a few months, the donor's liver grows back to much of its original size.

Continued on Page 17



Splash'N Boots is a Canadian children's musical duo consisting of Nick Adams (Splash) and Taes Leavitt (Boots). Splash'N Boots joined the Treehouse family in 2015, the number one pre-school channel in Canada, Solash N Boots have created over 100 episodes which air in 8.3 million homes across the country.

Solash'N Boots have released nine award winning CDs, and three full-length DVDs. The cuttingedge dup have been nominated in 2014 and 2015 for Children's Album of the Year at the JUNO Awards, and were crowned Canadian Children's Music Group of the Year three times at the Sirius XM Independent Music Awards.

Splash'N Boots have toured across Canada as the stars of Treehouse TV's Roll Play LIVE, in 2014, and 2015 they filled the massive Molson Amphitheatre for Treehouse televised performances alongside world renowned children's entertainers. The Wiggles.











On the Floating Stage at Merrit Park - King St. We



CHERYL CLOCK/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

After reading a story about Jane Villeneuve's need for a liver last November, Leanne Becevel, right, stepped forward. She donated a piece of her liver to Jane in January. On this day, they met for the first time since the operation.

Dain City put on lockdown

LAURA BARTON Postmedia Network

Dain City found itself on lockdown last Saturday night. Niagara Regional Police responded to a call at about 5 p.m. on Erie Street, and as the incident progressed, it was discovered there was a man

in distress who may have had access to weapons. The NRP's emergency task unit and canine unit were called to the scene. Crisis negotiators were also on hand. For public safety, residents of Dain City were asked

to leave their homes. Amii Rohitaille, who lives on the corner of Erie Street and Bay Avenue, said she was scared when police asked her to leave

"It's very scary not knowing what was going on hut knowing it was serious enough that

Police were asking residents to leave their homes and not return until the situation was clear, hut couldn't give them

any answers to their questions at that time. Police set up road hlocks at Huron Street and Forks

Road at the Dain City hridge. Residents were allowed to leave, but no one was able to

Robitaille sald she actually had to leave the area twice. Originally when asked to leave, she took her sons to the church in Dain City and then went hack for her hushand and daughters hut was told she couldn't go back. She said

police escorted the rest of her She said she first noticed something happening about 5:30 p.m. when she was taking

mily out safely.

her son's friend home. Two police officers were in front of

She said while she was away from her home, she was getting updates from friends and family, but it was hard to tell which story was real and which was not. She said that was just as scary

Dain City Convenience worker Hasen Sun said he wasn't at work last night, hut definitely heard about the incident

One of the rumours that had heen going around was that the community's variety store had been robbed and the robber was the one in dis-

He said many customers came in last Sunday morning when he got in at 8 and were asking about it, but he said it wasn't true. The store hadn't heen mhhed



LAURA BARTON/POSTNEDIA NETWORK "You don't expect this sort

Dain City residents were asked to leave their homes at about 5 p.m. as police dealt with a man in distress who had access to weapons Three "weapons" were

The distressed man gave himself up after hours of negotiation at ahout 10:30 p.m. last Saturday, Residents were then allowed to return to their homes

The man was taken into olice custody under the Mental Health Act and taken to Welland hospital.

detectives. They were secured as a matter of public safety, a police news release said. Robitaille said she got home at about 11:30 p.m. and there was still an officer in the area. She said the whole thing made her feel uneasy.

seized from his residence by of thing to happen in a small area like Dain City." She said once the officers left, the Welland neighbourhood was quiet again and it was as if nothing had even

harton@nostmedia.com

happened.

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Love of Star Wars, love of life

Postmerlia Network

The Force was with them when the fourth annual Jace Wars took over Port Colborne Historical and Marine

The event was started after Jace Russell, now six, fought and won his battle with a brain tumour when he was just 14 months old. Jace's dad, Aaron Russell said during one visit when Jace had to go into an MRI

machine, they got him to keep calm by having him pretend he was in a space-The Russell family wanted a way to

give back to McMaster Children's Hospital and the Ronald McDonald House Hamilton. Considering the father and son love of

Star Wars, it seemed like a perfect fit. "It's just a love letter to Star Wars and my son, so I combined the two and went from there," said Russell.

The event started out as a simple col-

lectible coin sale. On one side it said Jace Wars - and they were such a hit that they sold out in 72 hours. The day has since evolved into something much big-

Last Saturday's event featured facepainting, bouncy castles, sketch artists, photos with characters and other fun

things for families to take part of in support of cancer research. And, of course, Darth Vader made an

appearance, too, Russell said he couldn't say who was

inside the costumes of the characters that attended the party, but Elsa, Ariel from The Little Mermaid, and Storm Troopers and other characters from the Star Wars series showed up for the party. There were even people there to sup

port the cause by donating their hair to Wies for Kide Lee Beaupre, a friend of Russell's,

donated his long locks and raised just more than \$2,000 to boot.

Continued on next page

Love of Star Wars, love of life

He said he has been growing his hair

for three years and while he was going to cut it for cancer anyway, when Russell approached him about doing it for Jace Wars, he was on board, "My buddy Aaron asked if I was inter-

ested in donating my hair to this," he said. "I'm like, yeah, that's perfect timing." He said June marked three years since his last haircut. He collected donations

from friends and co-workers for the two weeks before the event Another highlight of the day was Nia-

gara's Largest Lightsaber Battle. For a small fee, kids got to make their own lightsabers out of pool noodles and then everyone went around to the field behind the museum to battle it out against Darth Vader. Lord Vader didn't stand a

chance against the kids and was quickly defeated. Russell said the event is a way to not only have fun, but to celebrate, too. "We want to celebrate life because it's

so very precious."

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ara College guest speaker Paul Charette, chair of the board of directors of Bird Construction, donated \$250,000 toward a new scholarship fund at the school

College gets new scholarship fund

MICHELLE ALLENBERG Postmedia Network

Niagara College's graduation ceremony last Friday was one to remember

with the announcement of a new scholarshin Last Friday's convocation guest speaker

Paul Charette, chair of the board of directors of Bird Construction, announced a \$250,000 donation from he and his wife Gerri. The donation will go toward an endowed scholarship which will support those studying in the construction technology division. It will be an ongoing fund known as the Gerri and Paul Charette Endowed Scholarship Fund

Niagara College president Dan Patterson said the school would match Charette's donation. Patterson said an announcement of this magnitude has never been done at any of the college's convocations

"It's very exciting, especially when it comes from a person who works so hard and knows what it is to be successful, So this is very powerful and our students, faculty and audience gave him a stand ing ovation, it was very spontaneous and from the heart." Patterson said.

During the convocation Charette spoke about his difficult childhood. living with an alcoholic father, and the obstacles he had to overcome. When he was finished high school he received a scholarship for \$250 which allowed him to pursue post secondary education.

Charette received a diploma in civil technology from Red River College in Manitoba, After graduating in 1967 he joined Crippen Acres Engineering as an engineer technologist working in Manitoba. He later joined Bird Construction Co. Ltd. as a project coordinator, eventually becoming chief executive officer in 1991. In 2001 he joined the company's board of directors

"Every young person in Canada should at least be given the opportunity to get a post-secondary education. I really think education is the key to a successful life. Without an education I don't think you can fulfil your potential," Charette said.

For Charette, what really resonates is If he hadn't received money to attended college 51 years ago he wouldn't be where he is today. This has made giving back an integral part of who he is.

Continued on Page 15

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College gets new scholarship fund

"I think it is important that we continue that cycle," Charette said. Patterson said this scholarship really is about supporting the community by helping people who might not have had the opportunity to attend post secondary

"It is a fitting legacy. It will help students who need the financial support like he did a long time ago. So that connection is just resonated throughout the thousand plus people that we had celebrating convocation with us." Patterson said.

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Niagara women talk about life-saving transplant once the focus of a widespread plea for a donor

According to the Canadian Liver Foundation, a living donor operation is major surgery that requires hospitalization of up to 10 days, and up to three months of recovery. although the risk of death is

That day, Leanne drove away knowing it was the right thing to do.

he OK," she says.

ORGAN DONATION

For information on being a donor, visit https:// beadonor.ca

story, a crowd-sourcing campaign, relatives who stepped forward and Facebook posts. Jane's husband Wayne made a humper sticker for his car: Mother of twins needs a liver. Blood type O. If you can help. please call.

The couple was in the parking lot near the Mark's clothing store on Fourth Avenue the humper sticker. He shared it through social media. On another occasion, the

couple was driving in Toronto, when a man pulled up beside them. He handed Wayne his husiness card, with instructions to text him the information about Jane, and he'd share it through his social connections.

The community, too. stepped up to raise funds for the couple, who were both on a leave from their workplaces.

LIVING LIVER DONATION

For information on living liver donations, visit www.giftoflife.on.ca/en/ transplant.htm

Money was raised, food was brought to their house, and people offered their help hy cleaning their house, and driving the girls to appointments and activities. All so on finding a donor. In the end, it was Leanne who was the hest match.

The most difficult part was reassuring her children, and family that she would he OK. Jane's resolve never wavered either. In January, moments hefore she was wheeled into the operating room at Toronto General Hospital, she shared a moment of raw emotion with Wayne.

"I'm going in with my hox-ing gloves," she told him,

ing out Jane calls Leanne her a hero. But Leanne, shrugs off the word with humility. The

experience has been good for her, too, she insists. "I appreciate life," she say "I'm lucky to he able to do that. I'm blessed with that." "There's a little spot inside me that's filled," she says.

"It just feels good on the inside to help someone. Cclock@postmedia.com



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"I just knew it was going to

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Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services fire prevention officer Scott Lawson enters the blackened interior of a home after an early morning fire, on Thursday,

Smoke alarms save Port family of four

Postmedia Network

A family of four is safe after escaping a fire in their Port Colborne home last early warning of the smoke alarms also

"And I can tell you the fact there were working smoke alarms on both levels helped that dramatically," said Port Colborne deputy fire chief Mike Bendia. He said the family with two small chil-

alarms started ringing in their Clark Street home at about 3:35 a.m. The homeowners awoke to find the couch in the living room on fire, and escaped the house. "They got out because they were alerted by the smoke alarms," Bendia

"Everyone got out safe because the smoke alarms did their job."

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He said homeowner, who was not identified, also closed doors as the family fled the building, which "helped keep the fire from being a lot worse. In addition to saving their lives, the

allowed firefighters to respond quickly enough to prevent flames from severely damaging the building. "The couch is three-quarters con-

sumed, but there's a lot of heat and dren were sleeping when the smoke smoke damage," he said. The exterior of the house, however,

showed no sign that a fire had occurred. Bendia said fire prevention officer Scott Lawson was at the scene of the fire later that morning, investigating the cause of the fire.

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